



Photo: UN Women/Helio Miguel



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PRESIDENT OF PARLIAMENT MAKES A PLEDGE TO ADVANCE THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The President of Timor-Leste's Parliament pledges to persons living with disabilities for more inclusion in the State Budget allocation.

The President of Parliament, Arão Noé Amaral, re-affirmed the Parliament's commitment to the rights of persons living with disabilities and pledged to assess the possibility of developing a parliamentary resolution on the rights of persons with disabilities. This commitment was shared during a seminar on how to better include disability in the 2020 State Budget organized on 13 June with organizations of persons with disabilities, Parliamentarians, Government representatives, gender equality advocates and other partners, under the joint UN project Empower for Change. Notably, the President of Parliament also said he would invite the Government to submit a proposal for ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

"The Government has the obligation to protect persons with disabilities and not to exclude them from development programming and planning," Mr. Amaral said.

People living with disabilities are one of the groups most "left behind" in Timor-Leste. For example, seventy-two percent of people living with disabilities in Timor-Leste have not attended school, with girls with disabilities more likely to be out of school compared to boys with disabilities (Census 2015). Stigma, discrimination and limited availability of inclusive services are among the causes of this exclusion. Timor-Leste has not yet ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This remains a key aspiration and priority of people living with disabilities in Timor-Leste. Mr. Cesario da Silva, Director of the Association of Persons with Disabilities in Timor-Leste (ADTL), has experienced and observed discrimination and violence in his community. "The voices of persons with disabilities will be stronger if we have the support of a wide range of people, especially from those at the highest levels of the State," Mr. da Silva said.

During the seminar, several key government members, officials and Members of Parliament presented ideas to better include persons with disabilities.

Read the full article here: <https://www.un.org.tl/en/media-center/news-releases/disabilities>

EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

- 30 Aug: Referendum Anniversary
- 17 Sept: Consultation on UN Women's 2020 Annual Workplan
- 21 Sept: International Day of Peace
- 24 Sept: (Baucau) Market Vendor's Forum
- 25 Sept: Seminar on Women in Past Conflict
- 3 Oct: Women's Leadership Seminar (TBC)
- 11 Oct: International Day of Girl Child
- 15 Oct: International Day of Rural Women
- 24 Oct: UN Day
- Oct: 2nd Gender Coordination Group Meeting (TBC)
- 21-25 Oct: (South Africa) : 6th Global Conference on Violence against Women: [click here to see more](#)
- 31 Oct: Anniversary of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security
- 5-8: Nov: 4th World Conference of Women's Shelters: [click here to see more](#)
- 24-26 Nov: Beijing+25 Regional CSO Forum (Apply [Here](#)! Before 6 September)
- 27 - 29 Nov: (Thailand): Asia-Pacific Regional Review of the 25th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

WOMEN, PEACE & SECURITY



From
the people of Japan

The following two pages is dedicated to activities under the “Enhancing women’s meaningful Leadership and Participation in State Building and Development in Timor-Leste,” project which is generously funded by the Government of Japan



FROM POLICIES TO PERSONAL COMMITMENT: NGO BELUN JOINS FORCES WITH UN WOMEN IN THE STRUGGLE TO END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Antonio Soares Seran (Belun Municipal Coordinator in Oé-Cusse) participating in the UN Women/ WPS Gender Training. Photo: UN Women/Emily Hungerford

Conflict prevention and resolution has often been a male-dominated area in the past. NGO Belun has worked in the area of community conflict resolution and community development since 2004. In 2017, Belun began working with UN Women as part of its work on Women, Peace and Security, with generous support through the Government of Japan.

Belun created a gender policy to encourage women’s leadership and participation in the workplace, provided staff training on gender equality and gender-based violence and strengthened collaboration with local women’s organizations. Director of Belun, Luis da Costa Ximenes, shares the positive effects of this policy. “In the beginning, we faced resistance from some Belun staff to the concepts that women and men are equal and that they can do the same thing. Our culture and tradition run very deep, but we have seen some positive change, even from those most resistant to the concept of gender equality” he said.

National Project Officer at UN Women, Liliana Amaral, has also noticed a change in staff views when participating in training workshops. “From the first gender workshop conducted, one staff member resisted the idea that men could do the traditional work of women, such as cooking and washing, as it was not reflected in Timorese culture. However, in a later workshop, the staff member showed a change of perspective - that women and men can share roles at home and it’s not against cultural values. I have noticed that the workshops have helped the team to be more aware of gender concepts” she said.

The impact of the approach is also visible in Belun’s conflict prevention work. Antonio Soares Seran, Belun Municipal Coordinator in Oé-Cusse, has participated in several trainings on gender equality. “I understand now that I have an active role to play to make sure women are engaged in conflict resolution.”

Belun’s team provides information to the local community groups on the support available to those experiencing conflict and violence. “Before working with UN Women, I observed that there were lots of gender-based violence cases, but there was no community awareness of how to refer the cases and what gender-based violence meant. However, after the gender training and sharing this information on support systems available such as safe houses and the police, I have seen members in the community starting to refer more cases. This makes me happy to see that our work is improving people’s lives,” said Antonio.

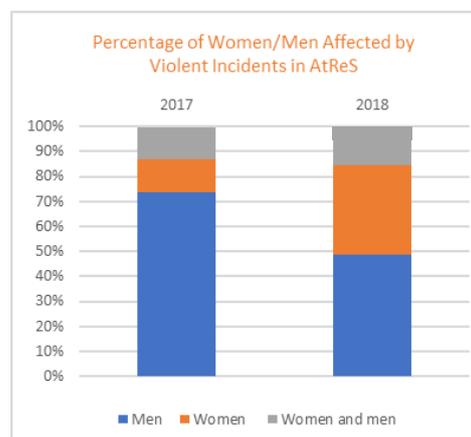
He has also noticed that members of community groups are now starting to show understanding that women and men have equal rights as a result of the training. Antonio is also helping women to improve their economic outcomes by providing additional business training to lending and savings groups. “From the small business activities and supporting women’s income, I now see some husbands encouraging women to participate in the community,” he described.

In 2008, Belun launched AtReS, an early warning early response system (atres.belun.tl) based on a network of community volunteers to help map conflict incidents across Timor–Leste. This aimed to raise awareness of risk factors leading to violent conflict and increase community capacities and networks to prevent conflict from escalating into violence within the community.

Initially, incidents involving women were being underreported using this system. Since the introduction of training on gender equality and putting in place measures for safely and anonymously recording incidents of gender-based violence and referring survivors to supports, reporting rates in incidents involving women has more than doubled in the three municipalities being monitored—Baucau, Covalima and Oé-Cusse.

In 2017, the system recorded 29 women and 158 men as victims of violence, and 28 incidents in which both women and men were victims. In 2018, these figures were 191 women and 262 men, with 80 incidents involving both women and men as victims.

This valuable data is shared with local leaders, the police, the women’s legal assistance NGO ALFeLa, the shelter and counseling provider Fokupers, and the Ministry of Interior’s National Directorate of Community Conflict Prevention. These networks of community stakeholders are then able to use the incident data to lead informed discussions regarding how to prevent further conflict and incidents of violence, including gender-based violence.



Reporting rates of incidents related to women across 3 municipalities in Timor-Leste. Data taken from Belun’s EWER Situational Review



Photo: UN Women/Helio Miguel

TIMOR-LESTE'S NAP 1325 STEERING COMMITTEE SUBMITS PROGRESS REPORT FOR THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL'S REPORT ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

Dili, April 2019 - A Steering Committee for Timor-Leste's National Action Plan (NAP) on Women Peace and Security has submitted its 2018 progress report to the Secretary General's Report, then to be submitted to UN Security Council by the Secretary General in New York. The Committee is made up of 13-line ministries and representatives of civil society.

In 2016, a National Action Plan (NAP) based on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) was launched with 47 commitments to increase women's participation and leadership in all sectors, including conflict prevention and protection from violence. Since then, steady progress has been made, with 8 activities completed and 14 activities underway.

These achievements have included the development of a network of 39 mediators (20 who are women) to support community-level peace building, a gender strategy for the national police, and increased attention to women's involvement in the defense forces and police, including as part of pre-deployment training for peacekeeping operations.

The progress on Women, Peace and Security has been made possible with the technical support of UN Women and the generous support of the Government of Japan.



PLANNING FOR RESULTS AND REACHING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Civil servants from the Ministry of Interior developed their management skills following a 3-day Results Based Management (RBM) workshop. Toward more effectively creating and planning programmes, developing goals and outcome measures, budgeting and writing reports, the Ministry personnel will be able to better take forward their commitments on Women, Peace and Security.

Chief of the Department of Road Safety, Evaristo Moniz, said that although the RBM approach is new for him and other staff, it will be valuable in the long-term.

"Before the workshop, we never knew that this information existed. Now we know how to make a plan for future activities," he said.

Police Inspector and Gender Focal Point, Lucia De Fatima Ximenes, also noticed a change in her performance at work since participating in WPS workshops similar to the RBM workshop.

"I now perform better as a police officer. I know the steps to create and manage good results. I also have more confidence to speak in the public about the results," she said.

Staff were also able to use some of their new skills to focus the preparation of the Ministry of Interior's Annual Action Planning for 2020 under the National Action Plan 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The workshop was organized by the Ministry of Interior's National Directorate for Community Conflict Prevention and was facilitated by UN Women Timor-Leste and the Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of Prime Minister's Office. It was made possible with the generous funding of the Government of Japan.



Photo: UN Women/Emily Hungerford



Photo: UN Women/Emily Hungerford

RURAL WOMEN SUSTAINING TIMOR-LESTE'S HERITAGE: WEAVING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Photos: UN Women/Helio Miguel

Joana Bobo, a weaver from the enclave of Oecusse

“Weaving tais is getting less these days. One day when we are gone, who is going to continue this activity?” lamented Joana Bobo, a weaver from the enclave of Oecusse. **Advocating for the value of weaving to be recognized and sustained, Joana has been teaching women and girls in Oecusse to weave. Starting within her family, she has passed on her skills as a weaver to her daughter when she was 13-year old, as well as another niece.**

Weaving tais is one typical rural economic activity, performed almost exclusively by women, where knowledge and techniques are most often passed down orally through matrilineal teaching. However, there has been a sign of drastic decrease of weaving activities and original tais preservation. The 2015 Population Census recorded that only 10% of households own looms.

Beyond their role in conserving the culture, Joana and other weavers' also importantly contribute to financially supporting their families through weaving. She highlighted, “we sustain our lives and support our children’s education with tais. We, as women tais weavers, have played a role in the family’s economy.” In recent years, there has been growing concern that textiles printed with patterns copying those woven in tais has started to grow, which are available at a cheaper price. She emphasized that the practice doesn’t recognize rural women’s knowledge and the printers should be required to seek permission to develop tais patterns that belong to the weavers and their communities.

Like Joana, the weavers Milena dos Santos from Bobonaro and Felisberta dos Santos from Lautem also rejected the printing of patterns used in tais. “As weavers from Bobonaro, we don’t want our original tais to be printed. And traditional tais is more expensive because it takes a longer time to make. Tais printing has been a threat to our local tais.”

Echoing this concern, Ismenia Gusmao, a weaver from the southern municipality of Covalima, feels that their work has been devalued, “I don’t see an appreciation and tais prices are becoming lower now.” To put the appreciation into practice, she suggested for the Government to create a policy of using tais in public service and school uniforms, and also building a weaving center to gather and transfer the knowledge to the younger generation.

In response to weavers’ concerns, the National Director for Cultural Promotion Mr. Carlos Freitas recognized out that “quality tais is the woven tais”. He noted that some tais designs are rarely seen anymore and the recommended tais to be registered as Intangible Cultural Heritage under UNESCO. He also called to protect the integrity of original tais, build weavers’ pride and recognize the value of their work

These recommendations were shared as part of a one-day discussion to Protect, Promote and Preserve Tais, organized by USAID’s Tourism for All Project, in collaboration with UN Women and other partners. The State Secretary of Art and Culture, Mr. Teofilo Caldas affirmed that the Government will review and discuss the points raised, and the need for collaboration from all key stakeholders.

Mr. Caldas recognized that weavers have been the champion for cultural preservation, “from all women weavers’ skillful hands, our cultural patrimony will not disappear.”



Photos: UN Women/Helio Miguel

Mr. Teofilo Caldas, State Secretary of Art and Culture

In Timor-Leste, 70% of the population live in rural areas, of which 35% are women mostly living in the subsistence economy. Part of their livelihood activities and practices are protecting, preserving and promoting cultural heritage. However, the discrimination they face limits their opportunities to be economically empowered and contribute to sustainable development. The country’s Strategic Development Plan aims at providing equal opportunities in rural areas by 2020, but women weavers face significant barriers. These barriers include a limited legal and policy framework for weavers to assert their rights, limited recognition of women’s productive contributions to the economy, devaluation of value chains of traditionally women-led economic products, social norms, cultural and attitudinal beliefs that limit women’s entrepreneurship and access to their economic rights.

Following the discussion, momentum is building to protect and promote the recognition of tais as a part of Timor-Leste’s unique cultural identity, and toward registering tais as Intangible Cultural Heritage under UNESCO. UN Women Timor-Leste is contributing to these efforts, and specifically supporting women weavers to leverage their collective power by coming together as associations of weavers. By making space for women’s voices to be heard, the weaver’s valuable contributions to the economy and society will be more visible, ensuring their expertise and practice of weaving tais is not left behind.

GENDER COORDINATION GROUP: a forum to strengthen collaboration



Photo: UN Women/Helio Miguel

Organizations and institutions from the government, civil society and development partners, including the UN came together to share their efforts to advance gender equality. The State Secretary of Equality and Inclusion (SEII) and UN Women convened the Gender Coordination Group (GCC) to facilitate the many actors working in Timor-Leste on gender equality to share progress, challenges, and initiatives toward increasing collaboration for accelerating progress on gender equality in Timor-Leste.

“It’s a big task and not easy, but we can find ways to improve gender equality, through joint efforts between the government, civil society, UN agencies, NGOs and all movements building on SEII’s coordination role,” said Secretary of State Maria José Fonseca Monteiro de Jesus.

The Gender Coordination Group was established in 2016 as a biannual forum for discussion to increase information sharing, partnerships and coordination between government and all partners working on gender equality. The Group is co-chaired between the Secretary of State for Equality and Inclusion and UN Women in Timor-Leste.

WOMEN ARE KEY FOR A SAFE AND PROSPEROUS BAUCAU



Photo: UN Women/Youle Beatty

In the municipalities of Baucau and Bobonaro, women vendors stressed that lack of functioning sanitation facilities and limited involvement of women in urban planning and market governance put women and girls at risk, reduced their overall well-being and compromised their ability to run their economic activities.

Vendor Ana Geralda Xavier has feared being around the market in the night time. The lack of toilet facilities forces many vendors to find empty patches of grass as an alternative to proper sanitation, where they might experience harassment and abuse. Ana noted “after all, there is nowhere to go, so we will continue to go back there.” She urged “I ask for all the brothers and fathers to change such behavior and not to do it [referring to public harassment of women] anymore. It makes us insecure and afraid to go out.”

Elisabeth Soares, the Coordinator of the Baucau Women, Peace and Security Group, acknowledged such insecurity and her concern toward women’s economic stability. “Security in Baucau market is not guaranteed and really affects women vendors’ business activities and their income.” The ongoing tension has built a barrier to progress on women’s economic and overall wellbeing.

As a result of UN Women’s 2017-2018 scoping study on Safe Cities in Timor-Leste, which highlighted that women and girls do not feel safe in public spaces in the capital Dili, four areas of a holistic approach for prevention and response to sexual harassment and violence in public spaces have been identified. These involve working through partnership to: transform social norms, strengthen laws and policies, increase investments in safe and viable infrastructure, and generate evidence of what works to prevent violence in public spaces. UN Women will work with sister UN Agencies and TOMAK to support capacity development and the initiative across the four areas.

Baucau Municipal Police General Commander Mr. Hermenegildo da Cruz, also pledged to collaborate, and has been concerned about people’s wellbeing; “when people do not feel safe, they will not have the desire to develop their social and economic life,” he said.

Through the launch of the Safe Cities Commitment, UN Women and the wider UN family, alongside diverse partners in Timor-Leste are closer to promoting gender-responsive planning and infrastructure practices, and turning commitments for safe and inclusive public spaces into a reality for all.

In March 2019, UN Women and TOMAK launched their Gender Market Assessment, followed by the President of the Baucau Municipal Authority, Antonio Guterres, signing up to jointly develop a Safe Baucau Initiative. President Guterres recognized the role of partnership; “I need all entities in the society to work together for peace and security. Women are organizers, moderators, facilitators and motivators. They are key for a safe and prosperous Baucau.”

The partnership aims to strengthen the municipal administration and local governance through gender equality and zero tolerance of sexual harassment in public spaces, including in the markets.

In Timor-Leste, women and girls have limited access to social protection systems, public services and sustainable infrastructure. As a minority of women are in leadership positions within the Government, the diverse perspectives of women and girls are often excluded from infrastructure planning and decision making processes. Market vendors, as informal workers, frequently face insecure working conditions due to the inadequate infrastructure and facilities available to vendors.

“NOW I AM AWARE THAT VIOLENCE IS NOT THE WAY TO EDUCATE OTHERS, BUT THROUGH RESPECT”

At least one in three women in Timor-Leste has experienced physical and sexual violence during her lifetime and the exposure is high among 15-19 year old, including in settings within and around schools. Global evidence and the high youth population in Timor-Leste makes a strong case to prevent this violence and work with young people, their families and their schools.

Making this investment, UN Women, with support from the Governments of Australia and the Republic of Korea, is supporting the Ministry of Education to roll-out a series of extra-curricular sessions using a framework titled Connect With Respect (CWR). The approach empowers teachers and school communities to prevent, address and respond effectively to gender discrimination by focusing on addressing the root causes of violence working together with teachers, students, parents and community leaders.

One teacher, Faustino S. de Carvalho with 14 years of teaching experience, noted a change in his interaction with his students and family after the first week of conducting the CWR training. “I have switched my communication approach with students and others at home. Now I am really aware that violence is not the way to educate others, but through respect. When you respect students, they will respect and listen to you,” said Mr. Carvalho. From the changes he made, he has also built a closer bond with people at home, “my wife has been really surprised and the kids who live with me at home have also become closer and communicate more with me.”

Students have admired his change, “he used to scold us and was a



Photo: UN Women/Helio Miguel

bit aggressive. It was scary to see him around. But now we can easily talk to and ask him questions. I feel safe to express my thought in his class,” said one of his first year students. Constructing safe and inclusive schools is key to changing the quality of education and contributes to creating a society that is free from violence against women and girls. “We are now taking an approach of creating a safe space for girls to feel secure and able to express themselves in the school environment. We have also reached to the students’ parents to actively involve them as well,” explained Mr. Carvalho.

Mr. Carvalho enrolled a number of his students in the Connect With Respect Initiative to build their equitable attitudes and become role models for others. His plan has worked accordingly, “I’ve heard those kids are now telling their friends not to make noise or bother others in the class. They are advocating for respect,” he emphasized.

The project is generously funded by the Government of the Republic of Korea and Government of Australia through UN Women’s Regional Stepping Up Initiative. It is being piloted in three schools in Dili and Liquica working in partnership with the Ministry of Education, parents and community leaders. To learn more, see [here](#)

GET TO KNOW A UN WOMEN INTERN



Photo: UN Women/Helio Miguel

Meet Siobhán Pielow, an intern from Ireland who just completed six-months supporting the UN Women Timor-Leste team. During her placement, she has advanced UN Women’s programming in support of Timor-Leste’s international gender equality commitments (also known as UN Women’s normative mandate). Among her numerous tasks, she provided technical assistance to the Government’s report on progress made on the Beijing Platform for Action in the 25 years since its adoption.

Let’s hear she what she has to share:

Can you tell us a little bit about Beijing +25?

“The 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, was one of the largest-ever gatherings of the United Nations, and a critical turning point in the world’s focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women. 2020 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Conference and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Timor-Leste can take advantage of this opportunity to catalyze national progress on Gender Equality and rejuvenate its commitment to action for gender equality and the empowerment of women.”

How can Beijing +25 help advance women’s life in Timor?

“The Platform for Action is a tool that advocates for gender equality and women’s empowerment can use to mobilize for action that improves the lives of women and girls in Timor-Leste. Timor-Leste’s signature on Beijing means that it must take strategic action in Twelve Critical Areas of Concern, therefore advocates can, and should, hold their leaders to account.”

On top of UN Women’s advocacy, Siobhán really likes the respect it has for its partners and its commitment to the most vulnerable persons in society. Timor-Leste’s commitment to human rights and equality of opportunity has left her incredibly impressed. For example, she thinks the current quota for women candidates in parliament elections is a fantastic step towards ensuring meaningful women’s representation at all levels of governance.

Preparing for her up-coming graduation, she is already thinking about the many things she would like to focus on for her future career! As well as equality, she is also passionate about migration, and is deeply concerned with how migrants are treated in the ‘globalized’ world. She would love to contribute to improving migrant welfare and helping to shape fairer, and more humane migration policy, particularly for women and children migrants. UN Women team thanks Siobhán for her great contributions to the work in Timor-Leste and the contributions she has yet to unveil.

Are you interested to Intern with UN Women Timor-Leste? See opportunities to join our team here: <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/about-us/jobs>

RESOURCES ON GENDER EQUALITY

WATCH:

Transformative Leadership: Leading for Gender Equality and Women's Right Video



Between April 2017 and December 2018, 40 participants (11 Men and 29 women) from the National Police, Secretary of State for Equality and Inclusion and the women's network Rede Feto, successfully completed a journey of transformative leadership. Through six-sessions totaling 48 hours, participants acquired the tools, knowledge and skills to create a stronger and more gender-equitable environment in their personal lives, communities and in their workspaces. This journey contributes to the implementation of the first pillar on leadership under the National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (#NAP1325). It was made possible with the generous funding of the Government of Japan.

Watch here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wPBOGErt_3E&t=66s

READ:

National Police Gender Strategy



The National Police (PNTL) defends the rights and freedoms of all Timorese people (women, men, girls and boys) and is the guarantor of internal security. Based on the Strategic Development Plan and the PNTL Strategic Plan 2014-2018, the mandate of the Gender Cabinet, the NAP 1325 and the NAP GBV, the PNTL has developed a Gender Strategy, which will contribute to: equal opportunities for women and men according to their needs and gender parity in the PNTL and a security situation for women, men, girls and boys in Timor-Leste that is further improved for all people to live peacefully. The Strategy was launched in 2018 and was made possible with the generous funding of the Government of Japan.

Available on request

SHARE:

Table of Sexual Harassment Behavior



Following years of advocacy by women's organizations and civil society in Timor-Leste, there is greater attention from government institutions and the general public to the issue of sexual harassment. As part of UN Women's partnership with the Civil Service Commission to address sexual harassment in the Public Administration, this poster was developed in collaboration with the JU'S, and illustrates various forms of sexual harassment behaviours and how they are treated under Timor-Leste's Labour Law, Penal Code and Civil Code legislation. The poster can be used to complement awareness-raising activities and contribute to identifying appropriate options in response to different forms of sexual harassment.

Read here: <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2019/08/table-of-sexual-harassment-behavior>

POSTER:

Maubisse Declaration Phase Two 2018 – 2023



The 8th Constitutional Government adopted the second Maubisse Declaration on the 12th of October 2018 in commemoration of International Day for Rural Women. This poster highlights the commitments made by 17 institutions who signed the Declaration for improving the lives of rural women and girls over a five-year period (2018-2023). The Declaration recognizes the need for all agents, public and private, to work together and notes the linkages between the Declaration and the objectives in the National Strategic Development Plan (2011-2030), the Programme of the 8th Constitutional Government, and Timor-Leste's commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Read here: <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2019/08/maubisse-declaration-phase-two-2018-2023>